

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 EUR-12 IO-10 AID-05 EB-07 /097 W

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R 021021Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2924

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY SANNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0779

E.TM 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, SO

SUBJECT: ARAB SUMMIT FOR MOGADISCIO

1. WE SEE NO RPT NO INDICATION THAT YIAD AND GSDR HAVE BECOME ANY LESS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT MOGADISCIO VENUE FOR ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE BEGINNING JUNE 28. IN MEANTIME, MANY ARAB AMBASSADORS HERE CONTINUE TO REMAIN IN DARK ABOUT THEIR CAPITALS' INTENTIONS. SYRIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD FONSEC OMAR ARTEH LAST WEEK THAT SUDAN WAS STILL PRESSING FOR POSTPONEMENT AND APPEARED TO BE GAINING SUPPORT, BUT ARTEH APPARENTLY SHRUGGED IT OFF.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SRC MEMBER MOHAMED OMAR GESS WAS INSTRUCTED TO URGE NUMAYRI TO DROP POSTPONEMENT PLANS AND SUPPORT MOGADISCIO VENUE DURING HIS VISIT TO SUDAN LAST WEEK. WE HAVE NO RPT NO FURTHER INFORMATION. SAUDI CHARGE HAS NOT RPT NOT HEARD FROM JIDDA SINCE SIAD VISIT TO KING KHALID AND IS PUZZLED.

3. SOVIET AMBASSADOR TOLD ME EVENING MAY 29 THAT SUMMIT WOULD QTE DEFINITELY UNQTE BE HELD IN MOGADISCIO ON JUNE 28 AND ALL TALK
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ABOUT POSTPONEMENT WAS NONSENSE. SAMSONOV IS NOT RPT NOT MOST CANDID

OBSERVER IN TOWN AND RUMORS NOW CIRCULATING IN MOGADISCIO THAT SIAD HAS BEEN EVADING HIM FOR PAST WEEK. HE MAY THEREFORE BE AS CONFUSED ABOUT JUNE 28 AS ANYONE ELSE.

4. GSDR PREPARATIONS FOR SUMMIT ARE GOING AHEAD BRISKLY. THIS PAST WEEK SOME 400 GSDR CIVIL SERVANTS WERE FORCED TO EVACUATE GOVERNMENT OWNED APT COMPLEX BUILT FOR 1974 OAU SUMMIT FOR FOREIGN GUESTS. ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATES WILL BE HOUSED THERE AND SOMALI BUREAUCRATS ARE BEING DEALT OUT LIKE STRANDED TOURISTS TO SPARE ROOMS AND UNINHABITED VILLAS THROUGHOUT MOGADISCIO. EMPTY VILLAS ARE ALSO BEING COMMANDEERED BY GSDR.

5. ARAB SIGN PAINTERS ARE BUSY ATTEMPTING TO GIVE ARAB ATMOSPHERE TO THIS LATIN SCRIPT CITY. LICENSE PLATES, STREET SIGNS, MINISTRY BUILDINGS AND POLITICAL POSTURE WORK NOW CARRY ARABIC BDRIPT. OFFICIAL DAILY OKTOBER STAR BEGAN FOUR PAGE ARABIC EDITION JUNE 1 (ARABIC LANGUAGE SECTION WAS PREVIOUSLY TWO-PAGE INSER).

6. POLITICAL ORIENTATION CENTERS, WHICH DISTRIBUTED FOODSTUFFS IN SHORT SUPPLY, HAVE MOVED FOOD QUEUES TO BACK DOOR, WHERE THEY ARE NOT RPT NOT VISIBLE FROM STREETS. DISTRIBUTION OF SOME COMMODITIES, LIKE CORN, HAS BEEN RETURNED TO SHOPS. STREETS ARE ALSO GETTING SOLED OR HALF-SOLED AND BARS CANNOT SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

7. PUBLICATION OF JOINT SAUDI/SOMALI COMMUNIQUE SENT RIPPLE OF JUBILATION THROUGH MOGADISCIO, SINCE MANY SOMALIS INTERPRETED COMMUNIQUE TO MEAN THAT SIAD WOULD RESCIND GOVERNMENT EDICT CONTRARY TO ISLAMIC LAW AND WOULD THROW RUSSIANS OUT. THAT OPTIMISM DIED AWAY IN WEEK THAT FOLLOWED BUT NOW APPEARS TO BE REVIVING SOMEWHAT. MANY SOMALIS WHO SHOULD KNOW BETTER -- AND SOME ARAB DIPLOMATS -- TELL US THAT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ARE TO BE EXPECTED IN WEEKS AHEAD. WE BELIEVE THAT MANY EXPECT SIAD TO BEGIN TO LEAN AWAY FROM SOVIETS AND PERHAPS SEVER HIS TIES COMPLETELY, AN XPECTATION WHICH WE BELIEVE WHOLLY UNTEALISTIC.

8. REVIVAL OF HOPE THAT DAYS OF SOVIETS NUMBERED IN SOMALIA MAY HAVE BEEN STIMULATED BY KNOWLEDGE THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED SOVIET ADVISORS IN SOMALIA HAVE BEGUN TO LEAVE MOGADISCIO ON TWICE WEEKLY AEROFLOT FLIGHTS. SOVIETS EVIDENTLY ARE NOT RPT NOT BEING REPLACED, AT LEAST IN EQUAL NUMBERS. GSDR CUSTOMS OFFICIAL TELLS US THAT 160 LEFT ON
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FRIDAY, MAY 30, AND THAT EVACUATION OF SIMILAR MAGNITUDE HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR SEVERAL WEEKS.

9. DEPARTURES COULD BE EXPLAINED BY SEASONAL TURNOVER, BY SUMMER VACATIONS OR BY GSDR-ORCHESTRATED SCENARIO WHICH IS INTENDED REDUCE NUMBERS OF SOVIET ADVISORS IN MOGADISCIO DURING ARAB SUMMI CONFERENCE. IF GSDR ABLE TO HIDE MOST CONSPICUOUS SIGNS OF SOVIET PRESENCE IN BERBERA FOR BENEFIT OF ARAB JOURNALISTS, THEN THEY

COULD DO NO RPT NO LESS FOR ARAB LEAGUE MEETING IN MOGADISCIO. IT IS
HOWEVER TOO EARLY TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT SOVIET DEPARTURES.

10. RADIO MOGADISCIO IS NOT RPT NOT UNAWARE OF THE GROWING
EXPECTATION THAT CHANGES WILL OCCUR IN SOMALIA IN WEEKS AHEAD.
SOMALI LANGUAGE BROADCAST ON RADIO MOGADISCIO MAY 30 ACCUSED QTE
IMPERIALISTS UNQTE OF SPREADING WORD THAT SOMALIA ABANDONING
SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM. RADIO COMMENTARY DENIED THAT SUCH CHANGES WERE
TAKING PLACE.

11. GSDR HAS ALSO BEGUN SEMINAR OF SOMALI SHEIKHS (MOGADISCIO
773) WHICH IS INTENDED TO SHOW SAUDIS AND OTHERS THAT ISLAMIC LAW
RULES IN SOMALIA. WE WOULD SUPPOSE THAT THIS TOO WILL PROVE

EPHEMERAL AND IS YET ANOTHER STAGE PROP FOR ARAB SUMMIT GATHERING.

12. FINALLY, WE BELIEVE GSDR MAY WELL BE PAINTING ITSELF INTO
CORNER REGARDING ARAB SUMMIT. IF SUMMIT DOES NOT RPT NOT TAKE PLACE,
THEN IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS WILL BE.
IT WILL BE COUNTED AS HUMILIATING FAILURE FOR SIAD, WHOSE
POPULARITY IN SOMALIA HAS BEEN STEADILY WANING OVER PAST SEVERAL
MONTHS.
HAMRICK

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